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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/081,028	02/21/2002	Farhad Farassat	MEISS68.001AUS	1645
20995	7590	03/22/2006		
KNOBBE MARTENS OLSON & BEAR LLP 2040 MAIN STREET FOURTEENTH FLOOR IRVINE, CA 92614			EXAMINER KRAMER, DEAN J	
			ART UNIT 3652	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 3/9/06 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

There is no clear antecedent basis for "the magazine" as recited in the fourth line of claim 6.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 15-20, and 22-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schweitzer et al. (U.S. Pat. # 5,203,659) in view of Hiroki (5,989,346).

The Schweitzer et al. ('659) patent shows a mechanism that substantially contains the limitations as set forth in the above claims except that its first and second clamping devices (42,44) are not disposed one above the other in a vertical arrangement so that they can substantially remove and deposit two different plates.

However, Hiroki shows a pair of vertically aligned clamps (25,26) individually movable in a common plane to simultaneously deposit and remove processed and unprocessed substrates, respectively, within a magazine (42). This magazine can vertically move all of its plate-receiving slots via an elevating mechanism (43).

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to arrange two additional vertically moveable clamping devices directly below the two existing clamping devices (42,44) of the Schweitzer et al. assembly as taught by Hiroki in order to increase the production capability of the resulting device. It is pointed out that the resulting clamps would be able to move vertically (similar to that shown in Figures 3 and 4 of the Hiroki patent) as well as linearly in the direction of extension arm portions (25a,26a) as best shown in Figures 9, 10, 12, and 13. This horizontal linear movement is along one dimension directly into and out of the magazine. Also, Hiroki shows an embodiment in Figure 17 comprising a pair of clamps (85,86) that can linearly move along a horizontal dimension.

In regard to claim 20, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to provide any well known actuating means for the clamp, such as pneumatic, electric, or magnetic means, especially since applicant has not specifically disclosed that any

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particular actuator solves any stated problem or is for any critical purpose, and it appears that the device would perform equally well with any commonly used actuator.

It is also pointed out that the modified Schweitzer et al. ('659) system could obviously function the method steps in the order listed in claims 6 or 11 of the instant application, or in the reverse order, depending on the specific process being performed on the chips or wafers.

4. Claims 3 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schweitzer et al. (U.S. Pat. # 5,203,659) in view of Hiroki as applied to claims 1 and 15 above, and further in view of Somekh et al..

The patent to Somekh et al. shows a carrier plate (40) having four straight sides generally forming a rectangular structure.

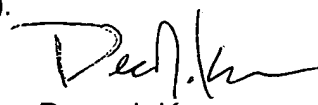
It would have been obvious to form the chip-carrier plates of the modified Schweitzer et al. device into a generally rectangular or square shape, depending on the design of the magazine useable therewith, as taught by Somekh et al. so that the plates better conform to receiving space in the magazine and/or processing stations.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dean J. Kramer whose telephone number is (571) 272-6926. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. (7:00-5:00).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eileen Lillis can be reached on (571) 272-6928. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Dean J. Kramer 3/18/06
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3652

djk
3/18/06